



Attorney Docket: 225/50037
PATENT

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1725
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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant: UWE HARDTKE
Serial No.: 09/885,443 Group Art Unit: 1725
Filed: JUNE 21, 2001 Examiner: L. Edmondson
Title: METHOD FOR THE PRODUCTION OF REINFORCED
HOLLOW SECTIONS WITH A CONTINUOUS PERIPHERY

REPLY

Mail Stop AF
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

This Reply is filed in response to the final Office Action dated March 5, 2004.

Independent claim 1 is again rejected, along with dependent claims 3, 9, and 10, as anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,419,146 to Buldhaupt et al. Reconsideration is requested.

In the first paragraph on page 7 of the Reply filed December 12, 2003, it is argued that Figure 16 of the Buldhaupt et al. patent does not involve a hollow space. The Examiner, in response, refers to Figures 5 and 10-11E. Although these figures do show hollow core areas, however, configurations shown in Figures 5 and 10-11E of the Buldhaupt et al. patent have nothing to do with the configuration depicted in Figure 16 of that patent. There is no reference to transferring the hollow areas from Figures 5 and 10-11E to the Figure 16 configuration, and nothing properly relied on by the Examiner suggests such a modification to the Buldhaupt et al. Figure 16 configuration.

The Examiner refers to column 9, line 51 through column 10, line 6, of the Buldhaupt et al. patent. This portion of the Buldhaupt et al. patent disclosure

supposedly suggests the use of a reinforcing plate. However, the referenced portion of the Buldhaupt et al. disclosure does not discuss a reinforcing plate; that portion instead discusses a sleeve with internal threading or a solid blank that is processed in a subsequent operation such that it serves as a connecting element. It also does not appear that the opening formed is actually located on a periphery of the hollow profiled section, as is the case according to the present invention. The Buldhaupt et al. patent does not disclose a reinforced hollow section with a continuous periphery produced by the forming, inserting, and joining operations specified in claim 1, and withdrawal of the rejection of claim 1 based on the Buldhaupt et al. patent is in order.

Independent claim 1 is also again rejected, along with dependent claims 3, 11, and 12, as unpatentable over U.S. Patent 6,134,767 to Schulze et al. Reconsideration is requested.

It is respectfully submitted that the Examiner's conclusion that the Schulze connection elements "may be any shape including plates" or flanges is unfounded. A flange is used to attach one structural component to another structural component via some joining procedure, such as gluing or welding. Schulze does not suggest this. Instead, in the Schulze method, one end of the connection element, which is in contact with the hollow profiled section, is designed such that when the wall of the hollow profiled section is drilled through, a form-fitting connection is created. No subsequent connecting process is provided. Because in practical terms the connection element does not extend into the hollow space of the hollow profiled section, but rather extends only by the small distance that is required in order to create a connection with the wall of the hollow profiled section, the connecting element can not serve as a reinforcing plate. It is also unclear what a facilitated mounting on other structures by means of the connection elements has to do with a reinforcing plate; specifically, it is not clear how a connection element could have the same purpose as a reinforcing plate. For these reasons, it is submitted that the rationale relied on by the Examiner in asserting that claim 1 is unpatentable over the Schulze patent is erroneous.

It is respectfully submitted that, for reasons discussed above, claim 1 as it presently appears in this application is allowable. Claims 3 and 9-12 depend on

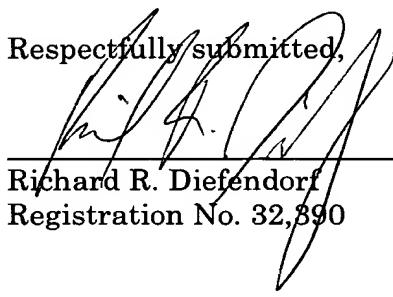
claim 1 and are allowable as well. All of the claims in this application, therefore, are presently allowable.

Should the Examiner have any questions after considering this Reply, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned attorney.

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Respectfully submitted,



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